

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, GE

SUBJ: BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IN BERLIN.

1. THE EMBASSY OBSERVED THE BICENTENNIAL IN EAST BERLIN ON THE EVENING OF JULY 2 WITH A WELL-ATTENDED RECEPTION AND BUFFET DINNER FOR 250 GDR AND DIPLOMATIC GUESTS AT THE RESIDENCE. HIGH-LEVEL GDR GUESTS INCLUDED SED POLITBURO MEMBERS KURT HAGER, FRIEDRICH EBERT, AND ALFRED NEUMANN, AND FOREIGN MINISTER OSKAR FISCHER, SEVERAL GDR STATE SECRETARIES, NUMEROUS REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FOREIGN AND TRADE MINISTRIES, AND GUESTS FROM THE EAST BERLIN CULTURAL COMMUNITY ALSO ATTENDED THE RECEPTION. AT THE RECEPTION, BOTH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GRUNERT AND USA DESK DIRECTOR DR. GEYER NOTED THE LARGE GDR OFFICIAL ATTENDANCE, AND GEYER SAID HE HOPED IT WOULD BE REPORTED.

2. SED PARTY ORGAN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND GAVE SHORT, PRO FORMA COVERAGE TO THE RECEPTION IN ITS JULY 3 EDITION AND PRINTED THE TEXT OF A CONGRATULATORY TELEGRAM FROM SED SECRETARY GENERAL ERICH HONECKER TO PRESIDEN FORD. THE HONECKER TELEGRAM READS:

"ON THE OCCASION OF THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA I SEND YOU THE BEST WISHES IN THE NAME OF THE
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PEOPLE OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AND IN MY NAME.

"THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAS OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE USA HAVE INSPIRED THE PEOPLE OF ALL CONTINENTS IN THEIR STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND JUSTICE.

"TODAY THE SALVATION OF MANKIND FROM WAR HAS BECOME A VITAL DUTY. THE TURN FOR THE BETTER THAT HAS BEEN INTRODUCED IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA, THE IMPORTANT RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE AS WELL AS OUR PERSONAL TALKS HELD IN HELSINKI LEAD ME TO THE HOPE THAT THE PROCESS OF DETENTE WILL BE CONTINUED.

"IN THIS SENSE THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AFFIRMS ITS FIRM INTENTION TO WORK FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL AND MUTALLY ADVANTAGEOUS RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE BASIS OF THE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN THE INTEREST OF SECURING PEACE AND FOR THE WELFARE OF BOTH OUR PEOPLES.

"PLEASE ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, MY SINCERE WISHES FOR YOUR PERSONAL WELL BEING."

3. THE GDR MEDIA ALSO RAN STRONGLY NEGATIVE COVERAGE OF THE US DURING THIS BICENTENNIAL PERIOD, MOST NOTABLY IN A DOCUMENTARY AIRED ON GDR TELEVISION JULY 2 TITLED "AMERICA: SICK LAND", PREPARED BY A GDR DOCUMENTARY CREW IN THE US. THE EMBASSY LEARNED THAT THE PROGRAM WAS RUN AGAIN THE NEXT DAY WHEN A GDR CITIZEN CALLED THE EMBASSY JULY 3 TO ASK FOR OUR COMMENTS ABOUT THE NEGATIVE IMAGE OF THE US PRESENTED IN THE GDR DOCUMENTARY. COOPER

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